

Bureau of Reclamation
Denver Federal Center
Attention: Richard Rizzi, Mail Code: 84-53000
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225-0007

Sept. 20, 2007

Dear Sirs:

I am writing this letter in response to information stating that recreational leases at Nelson Reservoir in Phillips Co., MT will most likely not be renewed at the end of our existing 5 yr. lease. In this case, lease holders would have to remove any existing structures at their own cost, or pay the bureau for removal.


I would like to express my deep concern on this subject. My husband, Pete and I along with my parents, John and Ruth Flansaas have leased our site for nearly 20 years. We followed another family, who also had the lease for many years, as they raised their family. Our cabin is very simple and mostly left as purchased. We did improve it by siding and roofing it with metal and replacing old windows after a wind storm damaged the former ones. We purchased the materials for these improvements at local Malta stores. We also installed a dock, which is available for others to use. We have enjoyed many summer days on the water of Nelson and many winter days on its ice. We often have numerous extended family, friends, and community members visiting and sharing this site and cabin. We have held church services, 4-H meetings, birthday parties and holiday dinners. My family enjoys ice fishing and we have had visitors from all over Montana, as well as some from CA., NV, UT, WA, OR, and MI. We take pride in keeping the area looking nice. We trim weeds and grass, remove garbage and keep the cabin painted. We have an outhouse, which is also available for others to use, if desired. I have camped at numerous other recreational sites around MT and often find that occasional users abuse the sites. Living in such a remote area, it is a long distance to any other water recreation areas. Nelson is an area we can go to fairly easily for a day or two at a time without making it a major vacation. Our Nelson cabin site has become an important part of our family traditions and we would hope to be able to continue these on to our children's families as they grow. What benefit would it be to have our cabin removed?


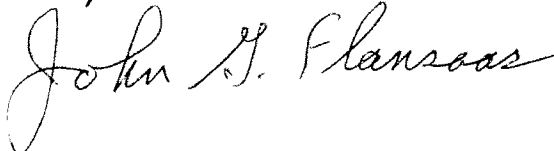
Economically speaking, not only do we pay the lease every year, we pay property tax and a refuse tax (even though there is no refuse dump near us). We purchase our supplies for the cabin in the local town of Malta. Along with the other 105 lessees, this provides a substantial income for the county. The average lease income to BOR is about \$37,100; \$350 x 106 lessees. I also believe the cabin owner's assoc. pays someone to grade the roads around the lake, as they are not considered to be county roads.

There is currently a fine campground, boat dock and restrooms for public to use. The Walleye's Unlimited organization is also planning to install another boat docking area. Only 1/3 of the lake has cabins on it. The lake is definitely not crowded by personal lots and there are plenty of places the public can easily get access to the water.

Nelson Reservoir is a great asset to our area. Cabin owners contribute significantly to making this a desirable area, for themselves as well as visitors to the area. I strongly feel that it would be detrimental if leases were discontinued, not only to cabin owners, but also to the public in general. Therefore, the BOR should continue to lease sites to cabin owners.

Sincerely


Carol Lumsden

CC: U.S. Sen. Max Baucus
U.S. Senator Jon Tester
U.S. Representative Dennis Rehberg